

**PUBLIC WORKS AND SAFETY
STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Monday, March 20, 2017**

The meeting of the Public Works and Safety Standing Committee was held on Monday, March 20, 2017, at 5:00 p.m., in the 5th Floor Conference Room of the Municipal Office Building. The following members were present: Commissioner Bynum, Chairman; Commissioners Philbrook, Kane, Murguia, Johnson; and Jeff Bryant, BPU Board Member. The following officials were also in attendance: Gordon Criswell and Joe Connor, Assistant County Administrators; Henry Couchman, Senior Attorney; Jeff Fisher, Executive Director of Public Works; Mike Tobin, Public Works Director; Brandon Grover, Asset Management Coordinator; and Jack Webb, Deputy Director of Parks & Recreation.

Chairman Bynum called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken and all members were present as shown above.

Approval of standing committee minutes for January 17, 2017. **On motion of Commissioner Philbrook, seconded by BPU Board Member Bryant, the minutes were approved.** Motion carried unanimously.

Committee Agenda:

**Item No. 1 – 171030...PROPOSED REVISIONS: COUNTY EMERGENCY
OPERATIONS PLAN-ESF 2**

Synopsis: Request approval of proposed revisions to Section ESF 2 – Communications of the County Emergency Operations Plan (CEOP), submitted by Matt May, Emergency Management Director.

Jackie Miller said I am here on behalf of Matt May and Emergency Management. We are bringing forward the emergency support function number two and that deals with communications. This particular section of the Emergency Operations Plan really needed a complete rewrite. With the update of the entire communications system, we thought it would be

really ugly and almost impossible to read if we tracked changes on that. Frankly, there still may be some things that would be brought forward later. Not changing anybody's roles and responsibilities but as you can imagine, this was a very large project just trying to understand everything about that communications system and getting everyone to agree and the correct information in there. We think that we're in a pretty good place with this and all of the stakeholders and partners did agree with the roles and responsibilities.

Commissioner Philbrook said thank you. **Ms. Miller** said you're welcome. **Chairman Bynum** asked is that your comment. **Chairman Bynum** said just to reiterate one more time, I think this is the last component that you're bringing forward and then you'll bring the whole thing forward. **Ms. Miller** said actually we still have—I'm kind of sorry to be the bearer of bad news. I guess its good news that we have enough change to update, but we will be bringing forward the Emergency Support Function 3, which is the Public Works section; and then we'll be bringing one more and that ESF 4, 9 and 10; that would be the fire suppression, the search and rescue as well as hazardous materials. We're bringing forward all those together because they're very interrelated and the Fire Department is the lead on all of those. We'll have two more and then the base plan and the whole shebang.

Chairman Bynum said we're closing in on it. **Ms. Miller** said we certainly are. It's always a challenge to work on these things, but I think doing it the way that Matt had set out to do it, hopefully isn't too time consuming for you all. **Chairman Bynum** said it's great. It's got to be done and we appreciate all the work.

Acton: **Commissioner Philbrook made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to approve.** Roll call was taken and there were six "Ayes," Bryant, Philbrook, Murguia, Kane, Johnson, Bynum.

Item No. 2 – 171031...UPDATE: SOAR PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

Synopsis: SOAR initiative update as it relates to mowing, debris clean-up and boarding of vacant structures, submitted by Jeff Fisher, Public Works Director.

Jeff Fisher, Executive Director of Public Works, said I have Brandon Grover, our new Asset Management Coordinator, that's actually going to do the majority of the presentation and Mike Tobin, Deputy Public Works Director, to help fill in. Jack is at the table too.

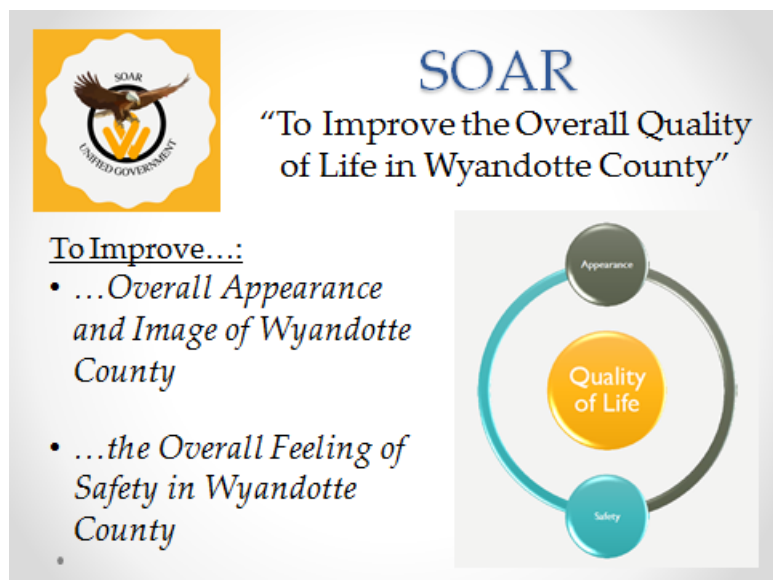
This initiative is born out of the SOAR Program and as a result of the Customer Satisfaction Survey 2016. Brandon will hit on that a little bit. The key departments are Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Code Enforcement. I have to commend this group. There are a few behind us as well that have participated. They've been very willing to come together and find good solutions. The whole idea is to streamline our mowing and debris management program and meet customer and public expectations. I believe we've got a good strategy. It will be a little bit of a learning curve this year, but I believe we've got a good foundation and we'll do an excellent job this year.



Brandon Grover, Asset Management Coordinator, said as Jeff kind of outlined, we want to hit some high points of the new plan we're coming up with for how we want to address the mowing and SOAR needs for the area. It's been a challenge to try to quantify a lot of this data. For so

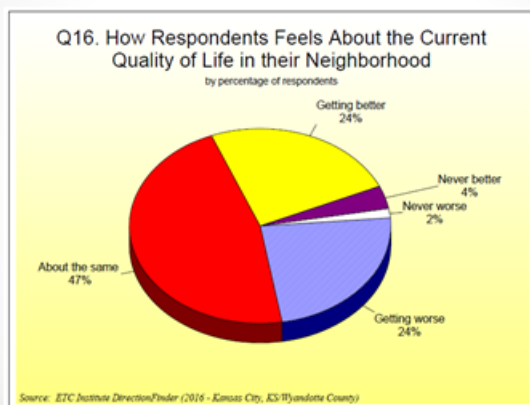
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long it's been Jack and his crews go out and mow what we know needs to be mowed. Well, trying to get it all mapped and putting numbers to everything has been quite fun actually.



As everybody has seen, the overall arching goal of SOAR is to improve the overall quality of life in Wyandotte County. Those were broken into two main aspects. First, the overall appearance and image of Wyandotte County and the overall feeling of safety. Both of those things lead very tightly into SOAR because the appearance and image is that curb appeal of nice clean cut yards that everybody sees, non-boarded up houses, things like that; the safety aspect. The blighted areas tend to attract the impoverished and the bad natured people.

Citizen Survey Takeaways



A lot of our data was pulled out of the citizen's survey as Jeff mentioned. This graph kind of illustrates the main key to it. Out of everybody that was surveyed, really only about half, 47% are about the same as far as if they're happy with how everything has gone over the last couple of years. About an even number, 28% feel it's getting better and 26% feel it's getting worse or it's the worse they've ever seen it. This is a really, really horrible figure for us to see in Public Works and as community servants because we don't want people to see or think things are getting worse, but seeing that makes us realize that we have to put that much more of an emphasis on it. In a way it's kind of good that people are letting us know these things.

Citizen Survey Takeaways

Importance-Satisfaction Rating
Kansas City, KS/Wyandotte County
City Services

Category of Service	Most Important %	Most Important Rank	Satisfaction %	Satisfaction Rank	Importance-Satisfaction Rating	IS Rating Rank
Very High Priority (IS > .20)						
Quality of maintenance of City streets	60%	1	29%	16	0.4201	1
Quality of communication with public	31%	2	32%	15	0.2102	2
High Priority (IS .16- .20)						
Quality of City Code Enforcement	26%	5	34%	13	0.1719	3
Quality of public transportation	23%	7	39%	12	0.1400	4
Quality of City's parks & recreation facilities	27%	4	49%	6	0.1364	5
City's storm water runoff/management system	23%	6	41%	11	0.1336	6
Quality of City's parks & recreation programs	21%	8	41%	10	0.1225	7
Quality of City Planning & Zoning	16%	9	32%	14	0.1061	8
Medium Priority (IS < .10)						
Quality of City police services	29%	3	71%	4	0.0856	9
Quality of City's sewer utility	15%	11	48%	7	0.0764	10
Quality of recycling	15%	10	51%	5	0.0748	11
Customer service received from City employees	13%	14	47%	8	0.0665	12
Quality of trash collection system	13%	13	72%	3	0.0359	13
Quality of Municipal Court	6%	16	45%	9	0.0341	14
Quality of ambulance services	11%	15	80%	2	0.0226	15
Quality of City fire services	13%	12	84%	1	0.0206	16

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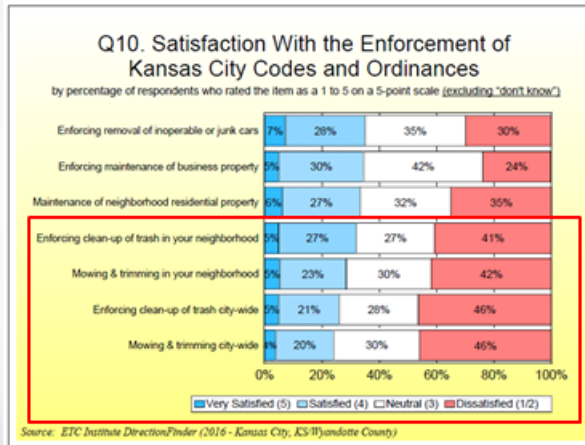
One of the top three things that was highlighted in the citizen's survey is the quality of code enforcement. Now this is kind of a broad category. There are several elements broken into what Code Enforcement really does. What we're going to touch on here is highlighted on this next slide which were the top four concerns within Code Enforcement, meaning enforcing and clean up of litter and debris and then mowing and trimming, both on a city-wide scale in individual neighborhoods.

Citizen Survey Takeaways

Category of Service	Most Important %	Most Important Rank	Satisfaction %	Satisfaction Rank	Importance-Satisfaction Rating	I-S Rating Rank
Very High Priority (IS > .20)						
Enforcing the clean up of litter and debris city-wide	48%	2	26%	7	0.3547	1
Mowing/Trimming on private and/or vacant property city-wide	41%	3	24%	8	0.3085	2
Enforcing the clean up of litter and debris in neighborhood	40%	4	32%	4	0.2700	3
Mowing/trimming on private and/or vacant property in neighborhood	29%	5	29%	5	0.2066	4
High Priority (IS .10-.20)						
Maintenance of neighborhood residential property	28%	6	33%	3	0.1832	5
Enforcing removal of inoperable or junk cars	22%	7	35%	1	0.1447	6
Enforcing maintenance of business property	16%	8	35%	2	0.1064	7
Medium Priority (IS < .10)						
None						

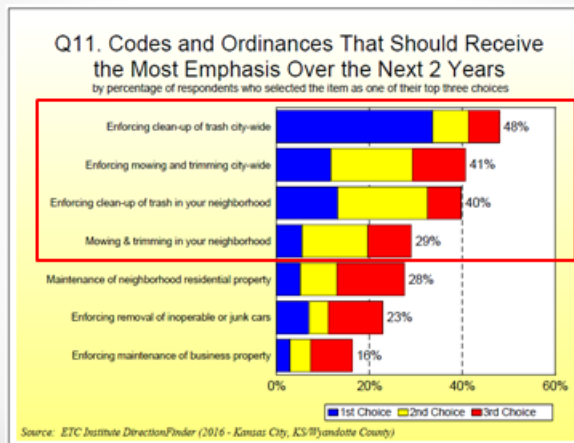
You can see those were of course the top four within Code Enforcement receiving some pretty high percentages of the polled group.

Citizen Survey Takeaways

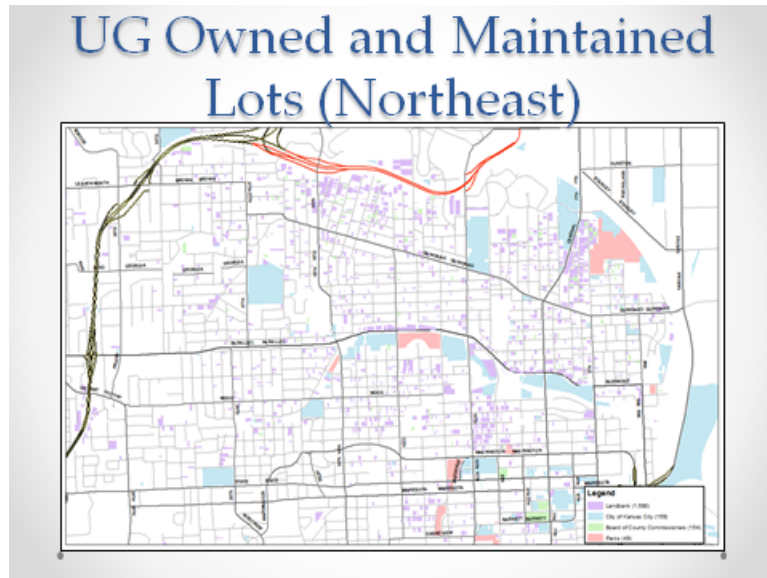


This next slide kind of breaks out based on how everybody really voted or put in their submissions. The ones we have highlighted are the ones we were talking about, those first four. Basically, in those numbers, you've got two-thirds to three-quarters of the polled people were unhappy with the mowing, the trimming, the trash clean up, not meaning regular trash service; meaning debris and yard, people dumping, things like that. Those numbers stuck out to us really big and helped us formulate some of our plans for how we want to address things.

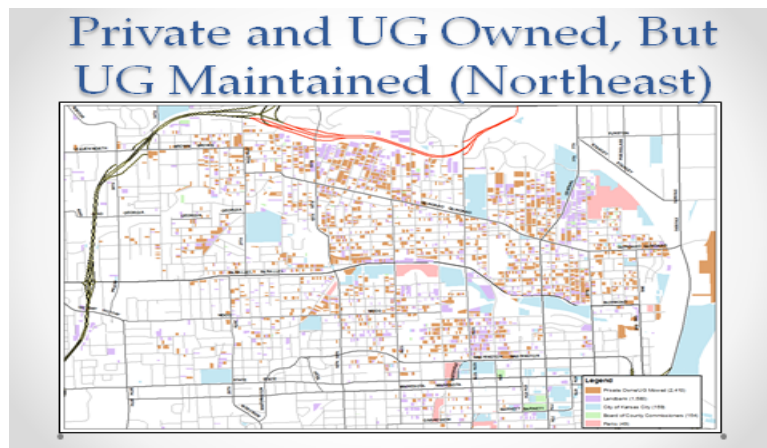
Citizen Survey Takeaways



Again, the same kind of information but saying how much percentage of people want resources dedicated to these efforts.



Now the fun part of the presentation everyone loves, our maps. Unfortunately, this one didn't show up well but you can see it in your packet. The purple colors that you see are actually what we consider Land Bank lots that are owned by the Land Bank. The rest, which are the blue, the green and pink which are the city of KCK, the Board of Commissioners, Unified Government and Parks owned. That totals about 2,000 lots just within the section here which is basically I-635 and down here you've got City Hall. So basically, City Hall west and I-635 east, you've got 2,000 UG owned lots that we've been maintaining.



This next slide is going to probably shock some people; it shocked us when we realized this. The ones you see in orange are non-city owned lots. These are privately owned lots the city has still been maintaining for various reasons. Most of them are complaint driven, code enforcement reasons, things like that. That number, just in this screenshot alone, is over 2,400. There are only 2,600 in the entire city, so 2,400 are in this section.

Commissioner Murguia asked on your map, are you not including south of the river. **Mr. Grover** said we just did a screenshot. When we try to get to a larger map on a presentation like this, it just was very hard to read. We have all that data and we can absolutely supply that to you if you want to see that map for your—**Commissioner Murguia** said no, that's okay. I just want to make sure you're going to mow—**Mr. Grover** said no, no, absolutely. It was just this was the largest concentration of the areas and gives the best graphical representation of what we're looking at as an overall program.

BPU Board Member Bryant said when you say its private owned but UG maintained, are the owners billed. **Mr. Grover** said at this time, some of them have been through Code Enforcement. Some of them haven't been. Some of them have just been. We've got lots on this side, lots on that side, let's just mow this straight through and make it a better look. Jack can speak better to how some of those decisions were made as complaints were mainly given to him. **Jack Webb, Deputy Director of Parks & Recreation**, said most of them were complaint driven. If you have one of our lots and in between you have a privately owned lot, through the complaints and the commission, we just mowed everything.

Out of those 2,600 lots, only 900 are current on taxes. I imagine we're going to get most of them back anyway. **Mr. Grover** said out of 2,600, only 900 showed that they are delinquent on taxes one or more years. Only 300 – 400 have structures on them based on the building footprint layer within our GIS. Some of those structures could be smaller barns; we haven't done QA/QC to figure that out. Sorry I misspoke. Jack Webb spoke correctly. 900 of them are current on taxes. The rest are one or more years delinquent. **Mr. Webb** said so we figure we'll get most of them back due to codes eventually.

Mr. Grover said that leads us into kind of the key changes that we want to point out. The first is we took a look at this and realized that the staffing and the contractors that we've had just

currently can't handle this to a level that we'd like to see. We've done a reorganization to the Parks and Recreation team and division to add a couple of new people in, brought some over from the Street Division just to kind of make the mowing team more robust; and also added the quick response trash team, which is who we call when we get an issue like there's been dumping in this area and things like that. That way we can focus a lot more energy on the SOAR initiative of getting areas cleaned up more efficiently and effectively.

We've developed an inventory and a classification for lots and established a new tiered mowing system which we'll highlight on the next slide. Basically, it's giving us a way to say we want to mow these lots at different levels of service based on location, based on areas around them, based on future development and things like that.

Key Points and Changes to UG Mowing Program

- Reorganization of Parks and Recreation to include new and repurposed staff dedicated to lot mowing and QRTT (Quick Response Trash Team).
- Inventory/Classification of lots to establish new "tiered mowing" system.
- Implementation of Lucity Asset Management to provide increased monitoring, tracking, and reporting.
- Greater coordination and notification between mowing and codes teams regarding condition of blighted properties.
- Implementation of weed control program for Landbank lots
- Notifications to be sent to property owners:
 - Privately owned lots will be notified that they are in violation of the Code of Ordinances and that if no action is taken the city will be forced to maintain the property and a bill will be placed on their taxes.
- Reduction of Right-of-Way mowing for 2018

Mike Tobin, Director of Public Works, said just to refresh everybody's memory, please recall that the mowing is done in different phases by different parts of the operation. The Street Department and Public Works mow right-a-ways, Parks mows the parks and other parts of the right-a-ways and the medians. We have the contractors involved which drags in the ball fields, the cemeteries ect., ect. What we're trying to do with the mowing is move everyone to one central space that answers to Jack so that there's no confusion.

If you will recall a few years ago, you called one place for this, you called one place for that, you called here. When we centralized just the reporting, that helped tremendously. When Brandon goes to the next slide where we start to talk about the tiered system, in addition to

centralizing this to help things, we're very aware of the change by the Commission that you wanted us to improve the way that these look.

Mr. Grover said one of the other big points of change that we've done is we've integrated all of this data into our Lucity Asset Management System. This is will help us on several things: monitoring, tracking and reporting. As you can see, we've already developed maps but here shortly we'll be able to develop real-time maps of when things are mowed, when the next cycle is going to be, things like that. We'll even publish that outwardly so residents can see that kind of information or report issues as well. That's part of our whole overall Lucity integration and OpenGov and open citizen requests type stuff.

We're also working with Code Enforcement itself to get that communication back and forth between the ones out in the field doing the majority of the work and the ones who are going to be billing and the ones that actually have the legal process to follow. Lucity will help with that because you can generate reports directly from it. It will aid in efficiency that way someone is not writing stuff down on a piece of paper just from a phone call. There are actual records that can be tracked and kept for as long as we want to keep them.

This year we're actually looking at doing a better weed control program that involves spraying for broadleaf weeds on our Land Bank lots. This won't be a complete weed killer so it won't be stripping the lots. It'll actually be broadleaf weeds. It should help us manage how often we have to mow because everyone knows weeds grow faster than regular grass.

Part of the notification system that you can see up here is we'll be alerting these property owners of those privately owned lots saying basically we've been taking care of these in the past; we've noticed that you haven't been. According to the regulations and the Code of Ordinances, you're supposed to maintain these to a reasonable level. If you fail to continue to do so, the city will have to take action again, but we will be billing you and putting that onto your tax roll so we'll have that information. Like we said, only 900 of these 2,600 are current on their taxes. At least it starts a legal proceeding, that way we have that kind of information if we decide to get them into a Land Bank process or take them over as the city.

We'll also be sending out notifications to go along with this to let people know that while we may have been maintaining a lot of the right-of-way in the past, right-of-way belongs to the property owners still. That's going to be their responsibility. We're still going to do it this year

and we're going to reduce the amount quite substantially next year. There'll still be some areas we have to do in major corridors but that's our big plan for right now.

Mowing Treatments and Schedule

- **Level A (Highest): "Front yard" treatment on a 14 day cycle.**
 - To be done with a finish mower, string trimmer, and blower
 - Trash and Debris to be removed before hand
- **Level B: "Front yard" treatment as on Level A only on a 20-30 day cycle.**
- **Level C: Current level of treatment on a 45-60 day cycle.**
 - A flail mower may be used on lots that are more difficult to maintain, but edge trimming and debris removal will still be done.
- **Level D: ROW treatment for wooded or difficult to maintain lots administered on a 30 day cycle.**

**Mowing cycles are based on evaluation of growth rate and weather conditions

The big thing everybody wants to see I'm sure is this inventory and classification for a tiered system, and we've got this on the next slide. Basically, we decided to come up with four levels just to kind of broadly summarize things for right now. If we decide we need to go in a little deeper in the future, we've got that availability. Level A is going to be your highest level of service. We're calling that the front yard treatment. Basically finish, mow, trim, weed eat and all the good fancy stuff we do on our own yards. We're hoping to be able to get all of these on a 14-day cycle. Keep in mind we don't know how many of these we're going to dedicate to an A level just yet. We're going to be evaluating all these levels as we do our first mowing cycle, saying this is in this type of area, we need to do this, this is in this, so on and so forth.

Level B is going to be that same front yard finish but only on a little bit longer of a treatment, about a 20 – 30 day cycle. Level C is going to be kind of the current level treatment you're seeing day now with a flail mower. It's a little bit more of a rough cut necessarily, but it's mainly used on areas that you can't really get a finished mower on effectively. If you're trying to run a finished mower on lots that have stumps, hills, rocks, bricks, that kind of stuff, you're going to tear up these mowers and you're not going to get a good quality job out of it anyway so a more robust mower does a little bit better of a job. Those are going to be done on about a 45 – 60 day cycle.

Level D will be the right-a-way treatment for like whatever difficult lots where we can't really get any kind of mower up on the hills or it's really terraced or something like that. We're just going to do a couple of passes right along the edge of the road to maintain that curb appeal. All these cycles are kind of influxed right now. Kind of based on weather, dependency and growth rate, we're still in motion on some of those. That's all we've got. Does anybody want to add anything or does anybody have any questions.

Commissioner Philbrook said I did hear you say that on some of the major corridors you're going to be going ahead and mowing along the sidewalks like State, Parallel and that sort of thing. Okay, because I know up and down State if you guys didn't mow like that, it would look pretty bad in some areas. I do appreciate that and I've noticed that around the community. Thank you very much for doing that.

Mr. Tobin said if I might, Commissioner, what we're referring to right there in the change of the right-of-way mowing, there was a remnant program basically is what it is from consolidation. When things changed in 1998 in KCK and the county merged, there were quite a bit of safety concerns and apparent concerns with some of the right-of-way, not only on our property, but on that owned by private citizens. We're mowing a lot of right-of-way right now that we shouldn't be and we're going to get out of that business.

Commissioner Philbrook asked can you give me an example. I know you hesitated saying that.

Mr. Tobin said I know. The right-a-way attached to major thoroughfares such as the Turner Diagonal or ramps coming off of I-70 or I-435, that's not what we're talking about. What we're talking about is in some of the mowing that we're doing on areas on other streets such as Donahoo or west of Hutton Road, some of those major east/west roads going up that way primarily is what we're talking about. I'd have to look at it to get much more specific than that.

Commissioner Philbrook said I kind of understand, like Kansas Avenue, west of the intersection there at Kansas Avenue and K-32 on either side like that. **Mr. Tobin** said I think so.

Mr. Fisher said in my experience what works well with a change in policy like this, we'll send out notifications in April. Those will be the first notifications and then remind them in the fall that in the spring of 2018, you will now be responsible for that maintenance and it becomes a

code enforcement. **Commissioner Philbrook** said just because it's on the outside of your fence doesn't mean it's not yours to maintain. **Mr. Fisher** said exactly. **Mr. Tobin** said this is primarily large track front issues. **Mr. Fisher** said then we can turn that time into streets, curbs, sidewalks that kind of thing that's core responsibility.

Commissioner Johnson said I don't have a question but I do because obviously my district is one that's in the eastern corridor. I'm just wondering about the consistency in terms of how you determine what gets A, B and C. Obviously there are more vacant lots in the eastern corridor, vacant lots or lots that need attention on the eastern corridor. I certainly would want to make sure that we're being equitable in terms of how we determine where we're going and how we're distributing those resources. I just want to make sure I say that on the record. **Mr. Tobin** said, Commissioner, this is going to be a learning experience for all of us going through here on exactly what goes to what tier. I'm sure there will be some bumps in the road along the way.

Commissioner Bynum said I just had a quick question. On the notifications that you're going to send to property owners, is that the same as or different from the current administrative fine process that's in place. **Mr. Grover** said the first one that we're planning to send out is a different notification just to let them know that we've seen this pattern in the past. That will be the one we send out here shortly. If we see this happening again, then we will turn it into a true codes proceeding where it follows that process with their notifications. **Commissioner Bynum** said we really appreciate it and we look forward to the new mowing process, Jack.

Action: For information only.

Chairman Bynum adjourned the meeting at 5:25 p.m.

Adjourn

tpl